

FY 2019
SMALL NEPA PROJECT DESCRIPTION
 Nez Perce-Clearwater National Forests

Please **do not leave any field BLANK**, unless it does not apply.
Submit form (Word doc) electronically to jjchynoweth@fs.fed.us by **November 7, 2018**.

(NOTE: Italicized / red comments are for reference only. You may delete them when completing form.)

Project Name	Leanna Meadow Restoration
District Name (or “Forestwide”)	Palouse
County where project located?	Latah
FS Personnel Name, Phone Number and Email <i>If a partnership, please add name, phone and email; however, an FS employee MUST BE the project proponent and point of contact.</i>	FS: Katie Howisey 208-875-1740 katlynmhowisey@fs.fed.us Partner: Latah Soil and Water Conservation District, c/o Jason Marchinek 208-874-3788 jmarchinek@latahsoil.org
Legal Location <i>Township(s), Range(s), and Section(s) of project.</i>	T41N, R1W, Section 31
District Ranger / Line Officer’s Name <i>Person(s) responsible for signing the decision document</i>	Stefani Spencer
Is the project associated with meeting a Forest target?	Yes, will count for range and watershed.
Which CE Category does this project fit? <i>Provide citation: 36 CFR 220.6(e)(x)</i> <i>See below regarding 220.6(d) projects.</i>	36 CFR 220.6 (e)(18)
<p>A Project Record or written Decision are <u>not required</u> for projects using 36 CFR 220.6 (d) categories.</p>	

At what level does the Decision Maker want the project scoped?

Internal X External*

Internal scoping will be through the Small NEPA IDT, unless otherwise specified. Scoping would be documented in the Extraordinary Circumstances Checklist.

*External scoping will be with the public via a scoping letter, a legal notice, and the scoping letter posted on the NPCWNF website. Postcards with a link to the website/scoping letter will be used for larger mailings. The Project will only be scoped to the Tribe(s) et al (see * below), unless otherwise specified.*

**For external scoping, please to complete block below. Note: please enter "NA" if left empty on purpose*

Provide a list of the individuals, groups, agencies, etc. *, with their mailing address and/or email address, who will be included for external Scoping. DO NOT provide only a name.

NA

What Level of Analysis (below) does the Decision Maker want for the Project?

 X **Low level:** If the project's level of public scrutiny is projected to be relatively low or unknown, the line officer chooses who we would contact for scoping (limited). In this case specialists would only do the checklist for each project. Documentation for low level analysis projects would be a completed checklist filled out by the specialists, including the name of the specialist who performed the analysis, the project name, and date it was completed. No other written documentation would be generated.

 Moderate level: If the project's level of public scrutiny is projected to be relatively moderate to high, then the line officer chooses who we would contact for scoping (a little broader). In this case, specialists would complete the checklist with the only write up being for items that are present and the rationale for the effects call. No write up would be given for items in the checklist that are not present. If the determination is no effect (which generally speaking, most CE's should have zero to very little adverse effects), then document why that determination was made in one paragraph or less. If the determination is an adverse effect, then why that determination was made would be written in less three paragraphs.

List the Management Area(s) in which your project is located.

E1, M2

What are the desired conditions (*relevant to your project*) for the Management Area(s) listed above?

M2: Timber harvest and grazing are provided to the extent that they protect and enhance riparian values (old-growth, aquatic ecosystems, water quality, and fishery and wildlife habitats.

E1: Timber production is cost effective and provides maximum protection of soil and water quality.

Desired conditions are described in Chapters 2 & 3 of the Nez Perce and Clearwater Forest Plans.

Is the project in an Inventoried Roadless Area (IRA)? No

Is the project in a congressionally designated area, ex. Wilderness Area, Wild & Scenic River Corridor, Research Natural Area, Historic Trail, etc.? No

Are there Floodplains or Wetlands in the project area? Yes. The Project will not modify or occupy the meadow/floodplain to an extent greater than already exists. The project proposes to increase water retention capacity in a meadow, thereby enhancing floodplain functions in the Corral Creek drainage and expanding Leanna Meadow's capacity as a wetland. As such, there will be no adverse impacts to floodplains or wetlands, thereby complying with EO 11988 and FSH 1909.15, Chapter 30.3.2.

Are there Municipal Watersheds in the project area? No

Is the project located in an RHCA? No

Describe the existing condition of the project area.

Leanna meadow is a narrow, wet headwaters meadow in the Corral Creek drainage. The total potential project area encompasses about 46 acres. The meadow has no clear stream channel, but does feature historic railroad shay lines (berms) with corresponding ditches. The berms are not particularly tall, but do serve to disrupt springtime sheet flow of water across the meadow, while the ditches drain water off of the meadow, in a departure from historic condition and to the detriment of the meadow's hydrologic function as a headwaters "sponge" releasing moisture slowly into late spring and summer. Currently, Leanna dries out fairly early in the season, often by late June or early July.

Surrounding timber is a dense mix of Douglas fir and grand fir with a small component of cedar, lodgepole pine and white pine, which is also a departure from historic condition, which would have been widely spaced large white pine and cedar. Meadow vegetation is fairly weedy with a mix of native grasses and sedges and introduced pasture grasses. Leanna is in the Tee pasture of the Corral Creek grazing allotment and is grazed by cattle annually between July and September. Adjacent to the meadow is a large cattle pond.

What is the Purpose and Need for the proposed action*?

Leanna is just upstream of Upper Tee Meadow, on IDL ownership, where the LSWCD is planning another fairly large railroad-feature mitigation and hydrologic restoration project. The two meadows, Tee and Leanna, make a natural pair of projects and fit into a targeted restoration effort across ownerships in the Corral Creek drainage. Restoration in Corral Creek fits into a broader strategic plan for the Potlatch River watershed for hydrologic restoration serving agriculture & municipalities and steelhead habitat improvement.

While Leanna itself is unlikely to ever see a steelhead trout, as a headwaters meadow it plays a role in regulating the downstream flow regime throughout the year. The purpose of this project is to improve Leanna meadow's water holding capacity, slowing the release of water through the spring and summer (making the flow less "flashy") so that more water holds in the system through the summer for steelhead habitat. More water also translates to greater forage production, which is beneficial for the cattle permittee and helps in out-competing dry site noxious weeds.

(To put the Leanna meadow project in context, a survey of the rest of the Corral Creek work is helpful. Previous restoration projects within the Corral Creek watershed have featured a wide variety and scale of approaches. Major meadow "makeover" projects featuring railroad feature re-contouring include Racetrack meadows, Avulsion meadow, Round meadow, Colby meadow, lower Tee meadow (all on private ownership), and Vassar and Five-Acre meadows (on USFS). Beaver Dam Analogues (BDAs) have been installed in Smith, Wet, Vassar, and Upper & Lower Tee meadows. Other projects have included culvert installation, road realignment, fencing, five beaver relocations, and a major fish passage barrier removal.)

** The purpose and need describes: Why is the action being proposed at this location at this time (what is the problem, the need for the action?)? And what is the desired goal/outcome (the purpose) of the action?*

Describe the Proposed Action.

Work will be accomplished by LSWCD crews, with support potentially coming from force-account USFS personnel for tree falling. Alta Science & Engineering will provide the project design.

Access to Leanna meadow will come from FS road 3814. Access to the site will be by ATV; no culverts or road improvements will be needed. The restoration approach for Leanna is to use a “lighter touch” than other meadow projects in Corral Creek. The design will use no heavy equipment and will not need road improvements for access. Work will be accomplished by hand and with portable power tools.

The meadow treatment itself will consist of strategic slash/large woody debris placement and revegetation (seeding, mulching, and planting.) Rather than the small-scale BDAs used in many other local projects, because of Leanna meadow’s long, narrow shape, the crew will use the same techniques to build meadow-spanning BDA structures, mimicking the way beaver dams span narrow valleys, creating several layers of holding areas for water retention. Additionally, the BDA design will be strategic in relation to the railroad berms: some BDAs will be designed to encourage breaching of berms through targeted erosion. Slash will also be used for floodplain roughness and to armor the dike for the cattle pond.

As much slash as is needed for the project will be harvested from the grand fir/Douglas fir growing within 50’ of the edge of the meadow. These trees will be felled by hand with a chainsaw, and the project design will not include root wads. Logs and heavy slash will be moved into place using a chainsaw winch.

Depending on the final project design, there may be barbed-wire or electric cattle fencing around the work area perimeter to support vegetation establishment.

In the season immediately following implementation, LSWCD and USFS personnel will conduct observational monitoring to determine what worked, what did not, and what (if any) repairs or follow up work will be necessary design success and vegetation establishment. Touch-up work may continue for several years after initial implementation.

Work would start in 2020 and be primarily completed in one field season, with follow up work as previously detailed.

This project will require a Joint Application for Stream Alteration (to be submitted by the LSWCD).

The project will not change any access restrictions.

List the Design Criteria / Mitigation Measures * to be included with the Proposed Action.

1. Conduct operations during dry periods.
2. Promptly install and appropriately maintain erosion control measures.
3. Use suitable species and establishment techniques to revegetate the site in compliance with local direction and requirements per FSM 2070 and FSM 2080 for vegetation ecology and prevention and control of invasive species.

** Additional Design Criteria/Measures can be listed under “Additional Information” on the last page of this form*

Small NEPA IDT/resource specialists are listed below. Contact them if you have any questions regarding their resource for your project.

Botany – Mike Hays, mhays01@fs.fed.us; 983-4028

Fisheries – Derrick Bawdon, dbawdon@fs.fed.us;

Heritage – Steve Lucas, slucas@fs.fed.us; 983-4040

Hydrology – Cynthia Valle, cvalle@fs.fed.us; 963-4203

Minerals – Marty Jones, martinjones@fs.fed.us; 983-5158

Recreation – Carol Hennessey, cahennessey@fs.fed.us; 935-4270

Soils – Robert Bergstrom, robertbergstrom@fs.fed.us; 963-4287

Wild and Scenic River – Chris Noyes, chnoyes@fs.fed.us; 935-4251

Wildlife – Jim Lutes, jamesrlutes@fs.fed.us; 963-4202

PROJECT MAPS

Please send – separate from this form and per the instructions outlined below – a GIS-generated map or maps of the project area (pdf format only) with the project submission email.

- Make sure that the map layers can be turned on / off / are editable.
- Make sure the map(s) fits on an 8.5 x 11 sheet of paper.

Provide at least one map, preferably “portrait” orientation, with the project area / features as:

- a Point, e.g. culvert, bridge, etc.,
- a Line, e.g. fence, road, creek, etc., and/or
- a Polygon, e.g. stand boundaries, treatment areas, etc.
 - Do not use a point if treating an area, use a polygon.
 - Points/lines/polygons need to be distinct and easily found on the map.
 - The project area / site needs to be centered on the map, especially if only one area/feature.

Please use the Forest Visitor Map as your map’s base layer.

- Do not add contour lines to the FV map unless needed for clarifying the proposed action. Contour lines can make the map difficult to read.
 - If contour lines are needed, make sure they are distinguishable from other linear features such as roads, trails, streams, etc.
- A topo map can be substituted for the FV map. If using a topo map but the contour lines are not important the topo lines should be light gray or opaque.
- Regardless of base map, make sure there are identifiable elements, e.g. towns, roads, streams, etc. on the map to help locate the project area on the landscape and that the elements are clearly labeled.

The preferred map scale (typically 1:24K) is whatever scale best presents the project area’s location and proposed activities:

- If the 1:24K scale is too small (i.e. the project feature(s) – point/line/polygon – would be hard to find or would be indistinguishable on just one map), use a larger scale to show the overall project area (coarse scale map) and smaller scaled maps to show the project features (fine scale map).
- If the 1:24K scale is too big (i.e. the project feature is a tiny point or thin line lost/hard to find on the larger landscape), use a smaller scale to highlight the feature while ensuring there are elements on the map to identify the project’s location.
- If you need to make additional maps, please make as few as possible.

At a minimum, all maps should include (with the preferred but not set in stone location on the map):

- a Title (project name and district name only (please); centered at top)
- a Legend (features clearly labeled; lower right corner)
- a Scale (in half mile, e.g. 0__0.25__0.5 miles, or full miles, e.g. 0__0.25__0.5__1.0 miles; lower left corner)
- a North Arrow (upper right corner)
 - Display all of the above in boxes with black outlines and a white backgrounds (not gray or yellow)
 - Do not ‘Halo’ the text or numbers or anything else on the map. Please.
 - The Scale needs to be large enough to read the numbers.

Finally, please include the mapmakers name and the date it was created on the map.

The Map(s) you provide will be used for Scoping the Public and the Tribes and in the Decision document. Please make sure they show – clearly, effectively, and professionally – what activity or activities are being proposed and where they are located on the Nez Perce - Clearwater National Forests.

SHAPEFILES

The resource specialists require the shapefile(s) of the project's proposed activities before they will conduct their analyses. Providing the shapefile does not substitute for providing a pdf map.

The Project Proponent needs to send the shapefile, or a location where the shapefile can be found, to the Small NEPA Planner (currently: jjchynoweth@fs.fed.us) by the time or shortly after the District Ranger submits this form.

- Shapefiles need to include the Project Name and have the Feature (culvert, bridge, etc.) labeled.
- Shapefiles need to include the following extensions – .dbf, .prj, .sbn, .shp, .shx, and .xml.

PROPONENT: When submitting the shapefile(s) you must include in the email how the location(s) of the project feature(s), i.e. line, point, and/or polygon, were determined (see below):

- Field-collected GPS data;
- From existing corporate GIS data (provide name of GIS layer);
- Created (digitized) from an aerial photo;
- Created (digitized) from the existing corporate GIS data;
- Created (digitized) from the NPCLW Visitor Map;
- Other (describe).